February 12, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: Howard P. Willens

RE: Staff meeting February 11, 1964

This staff meeting was called by Mr. Rankin to put before the staff the question of the proper handling of the allegations of Lee Harvey Oswald as an undercover agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation or other federal investigative agency.

Mr. Rankin reviewed for the members of the staff some of the salient facts regarding these allegations. He reported to the staff on the Commission meeting at which this matter was discussed with Texas officials Duff, Wade, Alexander, Jenkins and Storey. He also brought before the meeting the fact that the FBI in the Gaberling report of December 23, 1963 had omitted information to the effect that the name, address, telephone number, license number of Special Agent James P. Hosty, Jr. of the Dallas office of the FBI was contained in Oswald's address book. To complete the factual picture he pointed out to the staff that the Commission had received the letter of the FBI dated January 27, 1964 in which the fact that some of this information was contained in Oswald's address book was officially communicated to the Commission by the Bureau. Mr. Rankin indicated that this matter was an extremely difficult one which had concerned him and members of the Commission during the past few weeks.

The opinions of the members of the staff varied widely. Some thought that nothing should be done at this time until we had a further opportunity to appraise fully the work of the FBI, at which time a proper letter could be addressed to the FBI. Some members of the staff thought the significance of this omission was not particularly great and that no further action should be taken at this time. Most of the members of the staff, however, thought that the omission of the Hosty information was of considerable importance and could not be ignored by the Commission. There was discussion as to the

possibility of the adverse effect on the relationship with the FBI if this matter were brought to the attention. He thought he supposed that pointing this criticism out to the FBI might in fact produce more accurate reports by the FBI in the future. I suggested that the group consider the possibility of addressing a letter to the FBI which would request an explanation from the Bureau regarding this matter. The majority of the members of the staff present at the meeting did not agree with the proposal that something of this sort be done in the near future.

At the end of the meeting Mr. Rankin suggested that the members of the staff consider all the facets of this problem more fully and indicated that there would be a subsequent staff meeting to discuss this further.